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ABSTRACT

This document is used in a collaborative project that engages children and adolescents in alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention activities through the arts. The project offers an innovative teaching resource that uses the universal language of the arts for drug prevention. By creating murals with drug prevention themes, elementary and secondary school students can engage in a fun activity that fosters cooperation and critical thinking, and encourages creative expression. The packet contains background information to assist teachers in conducting the Murals Reflection project. The project is designed to be used as part of an anti-drug education program and can be used in any youth serving setting. Suggestions are provided for involving parents, families, and communities in the program. Complete kit includes 10-minute video explaining the program and illustrating how murals were created in several classrooms. (JDM)

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Murals

ED 456 372

REFLECTING PREVENTION

Murals Reflecting Prevention is a creative and collaborative hands-on project which engages young people in alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention activities through the arts.

INSIDE:

Prevention Information (General and Age-Specific)

Creating a Mural

Community Involvement Ideas

Registration Materials

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Dear Student Educator:

Congratulations on taking the lead in bringing the Murals Reflecting Prevention project to your school or organization! This project is an innovative teaching resource for educators that uses the creative and universal language of the arts to lead students in an exciting exploration of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention. By creating colorful murals with positive drug prevention themes, youth in grades K—12 are engaged in a fun activity that fosters cooperation and critical thinking and encourages creative expression. The Murals Reflecting Prevention project was developed by Learning Systems Group and the U.S. Department of Education's Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program, with funding from the U.S. Department of Education.

This packet will provide you with background information to assist you in conducting the Murals Reflecting Prevention project. It contains:

- Video—a fun 10-minute video to view with your students explaining the program and illustrating how murals were created in several classrooms
- Prevention Information—general information on alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention and age-appropriate alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention information to assist you in preparing lessons and selecting an appropriate drug prevention theme for your mural
- Creating A Mural—a step-by-step guide to creating your mural
- Community Involvement Ideas—suggestions for involving parents, families, and other members of your community in the program

The Murals Reflecting Prevention project is designed so that it can be conducted in any classroom or youth-serving group to complement your existing drug prevention program. We encourage you to share these materials with your colleagues in order to maximize school and community involvement and use the materials year after year as a fun and creative learning experience for your students.

Thank you for participating in this exciting national initiative to help prevent alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use among our nation's youth.

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We want to hear from you!
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Introduction

The sixth National Education Goal calls for "safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools" by the year 2000. This is a goal to which many educators across the nation are committed. Impressive strides have been made at the national, state, and especially local levels.

However, surveys have indicated that we still have a long way to go. Young people across the country continue to use alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs at unacceptably high levels and with increasingly alarming and devastating consequences:

- High school students and young adults in the U.S. use more illicit drugs than those in any other industrialized nation. (National Institute on Drug Abuse's Annual High School Survey, 1992)
- Reports indicate that the age of initiation of first use continues to fall.
- Alcohol-related traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for youth between 15–24.

In light of these and many other staggering statistics, achieving the goal of safe and drug-free schools will depend largely on creative approaches to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention education as well as the commitment of everyone to work towards it.

This **Prevention Information** section was created to provide you, the teacher or youth group leader conducting the Murals Reflecting Prevention project, with the background information you may need to prepare lessons on drug prevention for your students. The background information contained in this section should familiarize you with some of the basic concepts involved in drug prevention and give you ideas that will help you develop your lesson plans and inspire your students' murals.

You may or may not have experience in teaching alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) prevention. If you have, we commend you for your efforts and encourage you to continue. If you have not, we applaud your initiative and commitment to the health and well-being of your students and community. It is one of the goals of this project to bring more educators — teachers of art, social studies, and other subjects, and youth group leaders — into the prevention education arena thus ensuring that our nation's young people hear a consistently reinforced message.

This section is a resource from which both new and experienced prevention educators can draw valuable information for educating young people. It is not, however, comprehensive. Therefore, you are encouraged to consult your school's drug prevention curriculum and/or your colleague(s) who normally teach drug prevention for more information and to ensure that your lesson will complement and reinforce what your students have already learned.

The **Prevention Information** section is comprised of the following parts:

- Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Prevention—Overview
- Making A Difference
- Positive Prevention Messages
- Educating Your Students About Prevention
- Where To Go For More Information

In addition, on the pages that follow the section, you will find grade-specific suggestions for educating your students about drug prevention which will help you develop your lesson plans and select a theme for the mural.

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Prevention—Overview

Communicating about health in general and alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention in particular, can be very difficult — especially when your audience is young people. Many different approaches to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention education have been tried over the years. With each new approach, new knowledge is gained about what is and is not effective in terms of delaying or reducing ATOD use by young people.

For example, many years ago, it was believed that scare tactics would be an effective deterrent to adolescent drug use. However, it was learned that lessons about long-term harmful consequences had little impact on young people focused on the immediate future.

Slogans have been and continue to be popular components of prevention education, often in conjunction with assemblies or rallies. However, it is now understood that while these slogans serve as a memorable rallying point and useful reminder, a more comprehensive approach to prevention is needed. Effective drug prevention efforts are ongoing. They provide information as well as activities and are integrated across the curriculum and into the community.

RISK & RESILIENCY

While we don't know what causes some students to use alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and others to avoid it, we have learned about some of the factors that may influence use and some of the factors that seem to keep students from using. Based on this information, prevention theorist David Hawkins has developed a "risk and resiliency" model for understanding prevention.

Risk factors are those circumstances or groups of inter-related circumstances that make an individual more vulnerable to ATOD problems.

Risk factors include environmental and economic conditions, as well as skills and character traits.

Although risk factors can make a person more likely to use ATOD, this does not necessarily mean that he or she will do so. Risk factors should be viewed as increasing the chances of using alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.

In counterbalance to these risk factors, however, is an individual's resilience — the ability to resist or bounce back from negative factors or influences. Resilience is the result of the existence of a combination of protective factors. The protective factors include influences from different environments, including: school, community, family, peers; as well as inherent personal characteristics and skills.

Protective factors enable many young people to cope with life in a healthy, constructive, prosocial way and avoid ATOD use.

As an educator, you can help shape the school environment for your students, but you have little control over the risk factors in the other environments in which your students live. Your approach to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention, then, focuses on building resilience among the students — helping them develop the protective factors that will, hopefully, ultimately outweigh the combined risk factors in their lives.

With this framework in mind, as a teacher or youth group leader, you will be able to think of many ways in which you and your colleagues can assist in developing these protective factors through the arts and through other subjects and activities in your school.

Making a Difference

As a teacher, faculty member, or youth group leader, there are many things you can do to help your students stay drug-free.

Give Your Students the Facts—Current research shows that young people are often poorly informed about drugs and their effects. It is important to educate your students about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, and to make them aware of the laws concerning use and the consequences of breaking these laws, as well as the health and other personal problems that can be created by drug use.

Build Skills—As noted above, there are many skills that help people stay away from drugs. They include decision making, problem solving, stress management, coping with feelings, conflict resolution, and leisure and recreational skills. As an educator, you can help your students develop these skills, which will help them avoid stress and be able to deal with problems in a constructive way.

Help Your Students Develop a Sense of Self-Worth, Create Bonds, and Identify Healthy Alternatives—As an educator, you can contribute to your students' development of feelings of self-worth and belonging by recognizing their achievements and providing encouragement and support. You can also encourage your students to establish relationships with their peers and develop an attachment to their school or other organization. By involving your students in activities that reach out to their community, you can help them establish another important bond. Finally, students need opportunities to be exposed to and participate in constructive, prosocial activities that serve not only to occupy spare time, but also help them to explore and develop skills and build relationships.

Involve Your Community—Research shows that the most promising approaches to drug prevention are comprehensive programs that involve schools, parents, teachers, community leaders, and other members of the community. It is important that young people be consistently exposed to positive drug prevention information from all of these sources.

Start Early—Prevention efforts are most effective when they begin early. Studies have shown that attitudes concerning use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs are formed during pre-adolescence and early adolescence.

And **Continually Reinforce** the prevention message throughout a young person's education.

IF YOU SUSPECT A STUDENT IS USING DRUGS

Being alert to the signs of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use requires a keen eye. It is sometimes hard to know the difference between normal adolescent behavior and behavior caused by drugs. Changes that are extreme or last for more than a few days may signal drug use. Consider the following:

- Does your student seem withdrawn, depressed, tired, and careless about personal grooming?
- Has your student become hostile or uncooperative?
- Have your student's relationships with peers deteriorated?
- Has your student suddenly dropped his or her old friends?
- Is your student no longer doing well in school— grades slipping, attendance irregular?
- Has your student lost interest in hobbies, sports, and other favorite activities?
- Have your student's eating patterns changed?

Positive answers to any of these questions may indicate alcohol, tobacco, or other drug use. However, these signs may also apply to a child who is not using drugs but who may be having other problems at school or in the family.

If you suspect or confirm drug use by one of your students, visit with the principal to determine what actions you should take. You might also find assistance from some of the organizations listed in the **Resources** section of this document.

Educating Your Students About Prevention

GENERAL GUIDELINES

As you design your lesson plans for implementing the Murals Reflecting Prevention project, here are general guidelines that you should keep in mind.

DO

- Emphasize that many youth do not use drugs. This will help dispel the myth that "everyone else is doing it."
- Emphasize that students can say no to drugs and help them develop coping and refusal skills.
- Encourage civic responsibility and respect for laws.
- Emphasize that students help themselves and their communities by staying drug-free.
- Provide clear and unequivocal messages that illegal drug use is wrong and harmful for everyone.
- Encourage your students to value sound personal health and help them understand how drugs affect health.
- Emphasize that any drug use involves risks. Consuming even small amounts of some drugs can pose hazards to one's health and well being.
- Provide information that is appropriate for the developmental age, interests, and needs of students. (see pages 9-16)
- Provide information that reflects an understanding of cultural diversity. Materials should be sensitive to the students' cultural and ethnic backgrounds and should not further harmful stereotypes.
- Use role models. When it comes to communicating the value of a drug-free lifestyle, nothing makes a stronger impression on students than hearing the message from someone they respect.
- Promote activities that reinforce the positive, drug-free elements of student life.
- Tell your students about your school and community policies regarding alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Be sure to stress that alcohol consumption by anyone under 21 years of age is illegal.
- Focus on problems that drugs cause in relationships with family, friends, and peers.

DO NOT

- Separate or group students according to whether they may be using drugs.
- Sensationalize information about drugs.
- Unintentionally glamorize or glorify the use of drugs.
- Give mixed messages about drug use. It is not safe, for example, to try a drug "just once."
- Give students the opportunity to make excuses about their behavior. Young people should understand they are responsible for their own decisions and that they will be held accountable for the consequences of those decisions.
- Use illustrations or dramatizations that could teach youth how to obtain, prepare, or consume illegal drugs.
- Use recovering addicts or alcoholics as role models. Materials that feature recovering addicts implicitly convey the message to children that a drug user survived and perhaps even became famous or wealthy.
- Allow recountings of alcohol, tobacco or other drug use either by students or guest speakers.
- Tell your own stories of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use.
- Use terms such as social use, responsible use, recreational use, use/abuse; or that describe mind-altering drugs as mood-altering drugs (implying only temporary harm).
- "Blame the victim." Addiction is an illness. When you use negative terms to describe an addict, you may be sending the message that the individual is not worth helping.
- Use materials that teach that drug use is a child's own decision. Using an illegal or potentially life-threatening substance should not be held out as a decision for children to make.

Positive Prevention Messages

Research has indicated that some of the "negative" prevention messages used in the past were often ineffective. Scare tactics did not seem to work with school-age children, perhaps due to the youthful independence and rebelliousness, or the sense of immortality that young people often share.

Current prevention efforts therefore focus on the use of "positive" prevention messages. The goal is to give students ideas and alternatives—tell them what they can do, as well as what they cannot do. Students should be encouraged to value sound personal health. They should be made aware of ways to cope with peer pressure, boredom, and depression without using drugs. Students should be encouraged to use role models—to look up to individuals in their community who are successful and do not use harmful substances.

The murals your students create should focus on such positive themes and should avoid negative sayings or depictions of ATOD use or paraphernalia. Several suggested themes are noted in the opposite column along with some ideas about the prevention lesson that could be conducted related to that theme and ideas for murals that might result. Use these suggestions to develop your own ideas and lesson plans. Be creative!

Theme: Understanding the influence of advertising on ATOD use
Lesson: Discuss advertising — its purposes, tactics, and influences.
Mural: Replacing billboards promoting alcohol or tobacco products with ones promoting healthy activities

□

Theme: Identifying positive role models
Lesson: Who are the people we admire, emulate and why?
Mural: Montage of students' role models

□

Theme: Creating a drug-free community
Lesson: Examine costs to society of drug use, include monetary costs, but also human life, health, environment, etc. How else could money be spent?
Mural: Illustrate what community would look like without impact of drug problem.

□

Theme: Setting goals for the future
Lesson: Discuss students' goals for the future, their plans for achieving them, and potential obstacles, such as ATOD use, car crashes, accidental pregnancy, STD, etc.
Mural: The class in 20 years (collage of self-portraits) or,
The community in the year 2020 or,
The road to achieving our goals

□

Theme: Developing decision-making skills
Lesson: Discuss how we make healthy decisions.
Mural: A path or road illustrating choices and influences on decision-making

□

Theme: Understanding the effects of ATOD use on the body
Lesson: Examine negative short- and long-term effects of ATOD use on the body. Discuss the activities that cannot be done if you have an unhealthy body.
Mural: Figures in motion doing different activities students enjoy doing but could not if they used ATOD

Resources

WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION

The prevention information included in this packet was provided to familiarize you with some basic concepts involved in alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention. There are many other resources available that can provide additional prevention information and materials, including resources that may be available within your school or community. You are encouraged to first check with your school's ATOD prevention curriculum before proceeding with this project to ensure that your efforts are consistent with those of your colleagues and school system. Other helpful resources include:

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Fellow teachers (Health, Physical Education, Coaches, Life Skills, Biology, Social Studies)
Guidance Counselor
School Nurse
School Principal
School library or local library
Local drug prevention organizations & coalitions
Mayor's Task Force on Drug Prevention
Police Department
City/County alcohol & drug agency
Hospital community education office

STATE AND REGIONAL RESOURCES

Governor's Task Force on Drug Prevention
State Department of Education
State drug prevention resource centers
University-sponsored drug prevention hotlines and resource centers

DRUG INFORMATION RESOURCES

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information • 1-800-729-6686
A centralized source for information about alcohol and other drugs, including publications, fact sheets, posters, and videotapes.

Drug Abuse Information and Treatment Referral Line • 1-800-662-HELP
Provides confidential discussion and/or referrals, information related to drug use, treatment, support groups, and other services.

National Audio-Visual Center • 1-800-788-6282
The U.S. Department of Education has developed several excellent ATOD prevention videos for distribution to elementary and secondary students.

American Council for Drug Education • 301-294-0600
Organizes conferences; reviews scientific findings; and publishes books, a quarterly newsletter, and education kits.

Parents Resource Institute for Drug Education (PRIDE) • 404-577-4500
An information center for parents, teachers, media, etc. Provides resource materials; produces drug surveys for schools.

Resource Center on Substance Abuse Prevention and Disability • 202-783-2900
An up-to-date source of information about programs, reference materials, and research addressing drug prevention and disability.

Regional Centers for Drug-Free Schools and Communities

Midwest	708-571-4710 or 800-252-0283
Northeast	516-589-7022
Southeast	502-852-0052 or 800-621-7372
Southwest	405-325-1454 or 800-234-7972
Western	503-275-9480 or 800-547-6339

These five U.S. Department of Education regional centers are designed to help local school districts, State education agencies, and institutions of higher education develop alcohol and drug prevention education programs by providing training and technical assistance throughout their region. Each regional center publishes resouce materials and a newsletter.

PUBLICATIONS

Created by the U.S. Department of Education and available free from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, 1-800-729-6686

- *Success Stories from Drug-Free Schools,* 1992
- *Challenge Newsletter,* quarterly
- *Art of Prevention,* 1994
- *Growing Up Drug Free: A Parent's Guide to Prevention,* 1990
- *Learning to Live Drug Free: A Curriculum Model for Prevention,* 1990
- *What Works: Schools Without Drugs,* 1989

Grades K–3 (ages 5–8)

INTRODUCTION

Children in grades K–3 generally have limited knowledge about or exposure to drugs. The information they learn now will form the foundation for all future drug prevention efforts.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN IN GRADES K–3

Although children in grades K–3 generally have little or no direct experience with drugs, they are often aware of drugs and are curious about them. They may know adults who drink or smoke, and they see such activities on television.

Young children are aware that people use medications. They may see common drugs such as aspirin around the house, and may have been given some medication when ill. They may, therefore, see these drugs as something people take to make them feel better.

Young children are very trusting of adults. They believe information from adults is credible and accurate—whether it is in the form of a television advertisement or a parent offering them an aspirin for a fever. Unfortunately, this high level of trust may also cause them to engage in activities, including illegal activities, that could harm them.

Children in grades K–3 generally feel good about themselves and they want to please their parents and teachers. They are optimistic, eager, and excited about learning. Positive responses and evaluations of their efforts from their parents, teachers, and others can help children develop a sense of self-assurance and competence.

Young children enjoy being with other people, especially other children. Adults can help guide children in developing social skills and fostering positive relationships with others.

Young children need time to engage with others of their age in simple, adult-supervised experiences in which they can learn how to get along with others. During this period, children can develop refusal skills—the ability to say no to a request, demand, or dare from another young person. Young children are empathetic and want to help others.

CHILDREN IN GRADES K–3 NEED TO KNOW:

- What an illegal drug is, what it looks like, and what harm it can do.
- The difference among foods, poisons, medicines, and illicit drugs.
- That some medicines may help during illness, when prescribed by a doctor and administered by a parent, nurse, or other responsible adult—but that medicines are drugs and can be harmful if misused.
- That people can become dependent on alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, but that there are ways to help them.
- That each individual is ultimately responsible for his or her health and well-being, and that for young children this is a shared parent/child responsibility.
- That alcohol and tobacco are drugs.
- Why it is important to avoid unknown and possibly dangerous objects, containers, and substances.
- Which foods are nutritious and why exercise is important.
- Which adults, in school or out, are responsible people to whom one may go to ask questions or seek help.
- What the school and home rules are about alcohol and other drug use.
- That using alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs is illegal for all children.
- That a drug-free community is a safe and happy community, and that everyone should work together to make a community one to be proud of.

METHODS FOR DELIVERING DRUG PREVENTION EDUCATION FOR THIS AGE GROUP SHOULD:

- Give children information about drugs they may be somewhat familiar with, such as tobacco and alcohol. Emphasize that these drugs are harmful, and that using them can damage their health.
- Provide images of good health, connecting them with a healthy lifestyle.
- Give children information about common medicines, who should give them, etc., differentiating between drugs that are good for us and those that are harmful.
- Help children assess the validity of information sources, and enhance children's ability to communicate with trustworthy adults.
- Invite presentations by policy makers, business people, and other community leaders, building pride in a clean, drug-free neighborhood and community.
- Help build optimistic, positive self-perceptions in children.
- Provide positive feedback to children regarding the quality of their school work.
- Encourage helpfulness in children, because this quality will encourage strong peer relationships in later years.
- Reinforce positive peer and other social relationships.
- Structure and provide opportunities for cooperative group play to help children develop problem solving, negotiating, and decision making skills, as well as the opportunity to give and receive positive and negative feedback.
- Recognize that children in grades K–3 are motivated by a desire to please others, especially adults, a desire to know how to do things, and a desire to be older than they are.

Adapted from Learning to Live Drug-Free. *U.S. Department of Education.*

Grades 4–6 (ages 9–12)

INTRODUCTION

Children in grades 4–6 are increasingly exposed to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, and may begin to use them. They need more detailed information about drugs and a stronger motivation to avoid them. This is a particularly critical time because the younger children are when they try drugs, the more likely they are to become chronic users.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN IN GRADES 4–6

At this period in their lives, children usually believe drugs and drug use are wrong, but they are increasingly aware of drugs and need information about them.

During this period, children who are at risk of drug use become more aware of difficult home and family situations. They begin to experience feelings of low self-worth; they show signs of inadequate preparation to handle school expectations; and they may begin to believe that school is not for them.

Children in grades 4–6 are beginning a process of becoming independent which continues through adolescence. They increasingly seek to make choices on their own and to spend more time with their friends and less time with their families.

Toward the end of this period, children begin to make conscious decisions about their life, including decisions about whether to continue their education. This is a critical time relative to decisions about the future.

Children at the ages of nine through 12 experience the need to be accepted within a group. During this period, children begin to dress alike and create cliques, jokes, and code words in an attempt to belong.

Children are extremely vulnerable at these ages, and children with problems are easy prey to the lure of drug selling and use, which provide satisfaction in the form of a "quick fix" of money, status, or temporary escape from problems in their lives.

At this stage in their development, children are aware that there are many sources of information, some of them contradictory. Most of them still believe that whatever an adult tells them is the truth.

CHILDREN IN GRADES 4–6 NEED TO KNOW

- How to identify alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, cocaine, inhalants, hallucinogens, and stimulants in their various forms.
- That the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs is illegal at their age.
- That laws about drug use and sales are designed to protect people.
- About addiction and how addiction affects individuals and their families.
- That spit tobacco, cigarettes, wine coolers, and beer are drugs that are both harmful and illegal for them.
- How alcohol and loss of virginity are related.
- How drugs and AIDS are related.
- How and why the effects of drugs vary from person to person, especially immediately after use.
- How drugs affect different parts of the body, and why drugs are dangerous for growing bodies and developing minds.
- How drugs interfere with the performance of physical and intellectual tasks.
- How social influences such as media advertising, peer pressure, family influences, and community standards may promote drug use.

METHODS FOR DELIVERING DRUG PREVENTION EDUCATION FOR THIS AGE GROUP SHOULD:

- Focus on the drugs children are apt to use first—tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana. Teach about these drugs individually and help children build concrete reasons to say no to each one.
- Help children develop strategies to deal with rejection, frustration, disappointment, and failure.
- Focus on successes and positive accomplishments.
- Emphasize the development of self-esteem.
- Focus on life skills such as problem solving, resisting peer pressure, developing friendships, and coping with stress.
- Emphasize the development of healthy leisure activities, such as sports, music, art, clubs, volunteering, etc.
- Emphasize the development of personal and civic responsibility.
- Help children develop an orientation for the future which includes continuing their education and being responsible for themselves and others.
- Help children deal effectively with peers and the pressures they exert.
- Help children develop friendships that are rewarding and encourage individual growth.
- Not glamorize drug use through accepting the drug-using behavior of some folk heroes such as musicians, actors, or athletes.
- Encourage open and frank discussions of concerns related to drugs and drug use.
- Infuse drug prevention education throughout the curriculum.

Adapted from Learning to Live Drug-Free. *U.S. Department of Education.*

Grades 7–8 (ages 12–14)

INTRODUCTION

In adolescence, greatly expanded social opportunities put youth at much greater risk for alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. Youth in grades 7–8 need more sophisticated information about drugs and more ways to feel good about themselves.

CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTHS IN GRADES 7–8

Because their bodies change rapidly at this time, many adolescents become almost obsessed about their appearance and the speed at which they are developing.

Youths in grades 7–8 are risk takers. What scared them before intrigues them now. They believe they are invincible. The risks of using drugs are intriguing on several levels: violating the law, breaking parental and school rules, and defying physical danger or even death. Youths in grades 7–8 are often controlled by the moment. They may do things that violate a value or belief on the spur of the moment, depending to a great extent on the situation and who they are with. Alcohol and other drug use often arises out of such situational ethics.

Youths in grades 7–8 are beginning to think abstractly and to deal with the future. They can process more complex ideas and understand incongruities among words, behavior, and consequences of behavior.

Youths in grades 7–8 increasingly want to spend time with friends their own age. The motivation for much of adolescents' behavior is the desire to belong, especially to a peer group. The desire to belong produces a need to behave as their peers do.

Adolescents are beginning to recognize that not everything is strictly good or bad, right or wrong, but that there are different sides to moral problem solving and decision making. As a result, they are influenced less by others, and more by their own ability to make moral decisions.

Although the peer group is an important and sometimes controlling influence, individual friendships are perhaps more important.

YOUTHS IN GRADES 7–8 NEED TO KNOW

- How to identify alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, cocaine, inhalants, hallucinogens, and stimulants in their various forms.
- That the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs is illegal at their age.
- That experimenting with drugs is using drugs and does carry significant risks.
- That use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs is illegal, wrong, and harmful.
- How drugs are pushed and how society fights the drug supply problem.
- That laws about the use, manufacture, and sale of drugs are designed to protect people.
- The extent of the drug problem locally and the efforts of authorities to control it.
- How addiction affects individuals and their families.
- That spit tobacco, cigarettes, wine coolers, and beer are drugs which are both harmful and illegal for them.
- How steroid use can damage the body and mind.
- How and why the effects of drugs vary from person to person, especially immediately after use.
- How drugs affect different parts of the body, especially the circulatory, respiratory, nervous, and reproductive systems; and why drugs are dangerous for growing bodies and developing minds.
- How drugs interfere with the performance of physical and intellectual tasks.
- How alcohol and loss of virginity and pregnancy are related.
- How drugs and AIDS are related.
- How social influences such as media advertising, peer pressure, family influences, and community standards may promote drug use.

METHODS FOR DELIVERING DRUG PREVENTION EDUCATION FOR THIS AGE GROUP SHOULD:

- Emphasize that remaining drug-free is the best way to ensure a physically healthy and attractive body now and in the future.
- Provide information on the short- and long-term consequences of drug use. Focus on how drugs affect the human body and mind, human relationships, and their environment.
- Emphasize the unintended consequences of drug use, including crime, suicides, accidents, injuries, drownings, fires, HIV infection, loss of virginity, pregnancy, etc.
- Emphasize the law and its consequences, and help them develop personal and civic responsibility.
- Emphasize the establishment of positive life goals, such as continuing education and developing work skills.
- Encourage frank discussions about concerns related to drugs and drug use.
- Help youth understand the pressures of peers and be able to resist them.
- Emphasize that most people, including people their own age, do not use drugs.
- Help adolescents learn to make good decisions.
- Focus on life skills such as problem solving, resisting peer pressure, developing healthy friendships, coping with stress, and communicating with adults.
- Help adolescents develop friendships that encourage growth toward healthy, responsible adulthood.
- Infuse drug prevention education throughout the curriculum.

Adapted from Learning to Live Drug-Free. *U.S. Department of Education.*

Grades 9–12 (ages 14–18)

INTRODUCTION

Youths in grades 9–12 face much greater exposure to drugs than they had at earlier grades. These youths need more sophisticated information about drugs, they need to make connections between drug use and its consequences for individuals and society, and they need to see that drug use does not fit in with establishing productive life goals.

CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTHS IN GRADES 9–12

Older adolescents are increasingly able to deal with abstract concepts such as truth and justice. Together with a more mature moral view of the world, which allows them to consider how individuals and their actions affect others' lives, this ability to think and reason in the abstract allows them to consider the economic costs of drug use; the results of teen-age pregnancy; the reasons for laws; and the impact of drugs on our health care, rehabilitation, and judicial systems.

At ages 14 through 18, youths are interested in the future. They understand how choices they make now can have both immediate and long-term implications and consequences.

Adolescents continue to be body-oriented; they want to be physically healthy and attractive.

Adolescents face a great deal of stress from competing in school, learning how to handle relationships, dealing with societal pressures, and planning for the future. They may turn to drugs as a coping mechanism.

Youths ages 14 to 18 are creating their own ethical systems. They like to explore various interpretations of decisions and issues. As a result, they are willing to consider the implications of decisions, and they respond to attempts to develop decision making skills in various subjects.

YOUTHS IN GRADES 9–12 NEED TO KNOW

In addition to the same information that youths in grades 7–8 need to know (see previous page), youth in grades 9–12 also need to know:

- That the long- and short-term effects of specific drugs include addiction and death.
- The extent of the drug problem locally and what authorities are doing to control it.
- How drug use is related to certain diseases and disabilities, including AIDS, learning disorders and disabling conditions; birth defects; and heart, lung, and liver disease.
- How alcohol and other drug use is related to loss of virginity, date rape, and pregnancy.
- The standards of a drug-free workplace and how drug use impacts employment.
- That taking a combination of drugs, whether illegal or prescription, can be fatal.
- How alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs affect the developing fetus and the breastfeeding infant.
- The full effects and consequences of drug use on the performance of intellectual tasks.
- That drug use can affect opportunities for personal growth and professional success.
- That they are role models for younger youth.
- That there are treatment and intervention resources available to them. They should be familiar with these resources.

METHODS OF DELIVERING DRUG PREVENTION EDUCATION FOR THIS AGE GROUP SHOULD:

- Focus on the ways in which drugs affect society. Make sure youths understand the many costs to society that drug use creates.
- Infuse drug prevention education throughout the curriculum.
- Emphasize the establishment of worthwhile life goals, such as continuing education and developing work skills.
- Emphasize that seeking instant gratification can result in events that change the entire direction of a person's life—a pregnancy, an arrest for drug possession, or exclusion from a sports team for drug use.
- Point out the inconsistencies between using drugs and maintaining a healthy, attractive body. Let them know that drug use lowers the immune system, and the link between drug use and HIV infection.
- Help adolescents deal with stress and emphasize the development of healthy leisure activities, such as art, drama, music, and sports.
- Focus on life skills such as problem solving, coping with stress, maintaining healthy friendships, and communicating with a wide range of adults.
- Have as a foundation accurate, factual information from which youths can draw conclusions about the dangers of drug use.
- Encourage open and frank discussions about concerns related to drugs and drug use.

Adapted from Learning to Live Drug-Free. *U.S. Department of Education.*

Introduction

Murals are an exciting and valuable means of teaching self-expression, cooperation, and appreciation. The creation of a mural allows a program with a modest budget to engage in a large-scale activity that will excite student enthusiasm and invite creative work. Anyone can create a mural; even with a limited amount of space and materials. It's easy! If you are an art teacher, you may already be familiar with the process involved in creating murals. If you are not, the following section includes ideas and recommendations on how to create many kinds of murals—from permanent to portable—which can be made with a variety of materials. It will be up to you and your students to make many decisions regarding the murals you will be creating.

Below are suggested steps for creating murals for the Murals Reflecting Prevention project.

Preparation

PLAN & CONDUCT DRUG PREVENTION LESSONS

• Choose a topic for your drug prevention lessons. Please refer to the preceeding **Prevention Information** section for information and suggestions on age appropriate themes.

• Conduct the lessons, encouraging class participation and discussion. You might consider utilizing a cooperative teaching approach by "team teaching" with other teachers or administrators in your school.

INTRODUCE MURALS

• Introduce the concept of a mural to your class. Discuss different types of murals, and techniques and supplies that can be used to create a mural.

SELECT A THEME

• Ask your students to think about and suggest a theme for their mural based on the prevention lessons. The mural should focus on a positive prevention theme. Refer to **Prevention Information** in this packet for more information on drug prevention themes.

PLAN THE VISUAL IMAGES

• After deciding upon a theme, have your students work together to decide what visual images, words, ideas, etc. will be included in the mural to depict the theme that they have chosen. Several suggestions on how to begin this process are described below:

- Have students create a list of words or phrases associated with the selected theme. Encourage them to select words that conjure up a visual image. Have each student explain his/her suggestion to the class and how it relates to the theme.

- Divide students into small groups for brainstorming. After a set amount of time, reassemble and discuss the suggestions given by each group.

- Have the students work individually at their desks sketching visual ideas for the mural. Ask each student to choose his or her favorite sketch and discuss it with the class. After each student presents their sketch, you may combine them all to create a collage of images for the mural, or have the class discuss how to create a mural that incorporates elements from each student's sketch.

SELECT TYPE OF MURAL:

• Based on the age of the students, and the time, space, and materials available, decide on the type of mural you will create. While traditionally a mural is thought to be a large-scale painting on a wall, a mural can also be applied to flat material which is fastened to a wall or created on a portable material such as foamcore board, canvas or cardboard. Several types of murals are described below.

- ***Portable mural***—A portable mural is created on a piece of material that may be moved and exhibited in different locations and/or with other murals. Portable murals can be created on foamcore board (a lightweight material of pressed foam about 3/8 inch thick, often used for dry mounting), cardboard, plywood, butcher paper, or any other materials that you may have available to you. Portable murals are very versatile in that you may use paint, pencils, crayon, fabric, paper, buttons, magazine or newspaper clippings, or any variety of media to create your image. This type of mural is ideal for this project because it allows you to install your mural as an exhibit at a public venue with murals created by other students in your school or community.

- ***Permanent wall mural***—Painting a mural directly on a wall is a very exciting activity for students, and it will also serve as a constant reminder of the students' commitment to live drug-free. Permanent murals can be painted on a wall outside of your school, in the school cafeteria or hallway, in a shopping center, in a recreation center, or in any other appropriate space available to you. When creating a permanent mural, be sure to create a detailed and size-proportioned sketch of your picture before you begin the painting process. Before painting your mural, make sure that your selected surface is clean and free of all debris. Decide what type of paint is best to use on your selected wall surface ahd whether or not you need to paint a coat of primer on your surface before you begin your mural. Your school art teacher or maintenance person may be able to help you with this decision. Use non-toxic paints whenever possible.

DETERMINE THE TECHNIQUE:

• Determine what technique your students will use to create their mural. There are many different possibilities from which to choose, or you may combine one or more to create a truly unique effect. Some possibilities include:

- ***2-Dimensional***—using only paints or markers to draw the image
- ***Mosaic***—using a variety of textured media such as tiles or stones arranged on a wall or flat surface to create a textured design
- ***Collage***—overlapping cut paper, newspaper or magazine clippings, or other media to create your image
- ***3-Dimensional***—using a variety of media and materials pasted to the mural base to create a textural surface on your mural
- ***Found Objects***—using objects that students may bring from their house or may find at school or outside. The objects and materials used to create this type of mural should help to illustrate the theme that the class has selected.

• Determine what supplies will be needed. A variety of materials can be used depending on the type of mural the class is creating and the technique you will use. Check what kinds of art supplies are already on hand or could be easily obtained. These include not only the materials that will be used to create images on the mural, but also those that will provide the base for the mural, such as foamcore board. Students should be encouraged to explore and experiment with the various art materials available. You may consider limiting the choice of materials as an exercise in creativity. Or, introduce the class to materials that they have never worked with before.

Some supplies you may need	*Other materials you may want to use*
paint (tempera, acrylic, spray paint, or other)	textured fabrics (i.e. burlap, velvet, corduroy)
paintbrushes	string, yarn, rope
glue	different kinds of papers
scissors	corrugated cardboard
pencils	wire
markers	tile
masking tape	stone, seeds, shells
rubber cement	sponges
rulers	wood

Creation

After collectively visualizing the images that will be incorporated into your mural, your students should now be ready to begin to create their mural. This process will vary depending on the type, size, and style of mural that you will be creating. Following are some suggestions for different techniques that may be used to transfer your image onto your chosen surface.

TRANSFERRING YOUR DESIGN

• These methods may be used when working on a wall or other large-scale surface. Both require that you draw a detailed sketch of your image before beginning.

- ***Squaring up***—If you will be painting your mural on a large surface, you may want to use the squaring up method to transfer the design from paper to the large surface. To do this, divide your preliminary sketch into squares by drawing vertical and then horizontal lines with a pencil. Repeat the grid on the wall several times larger than your

sketch (depending on the size of the wall) and transfer the design square by square onto the wall. You can make the grid with light pencil, chalk, or masking tape.

- ***Projection***—Have students plan the image and sketch or copy it onto an overhead projector transparency or a piece of lightweight paper. Project the image onto your mural background and have students trace the image onto the background. Students may then use their chosen media to complete the mural.

Other techniques you may use to create your mural:

- ***Freehand sketch***—Have one or several students sketch the mural on the background freehand. Then have the other students color in or paint the details of the image.

- ***Collage of images***—Have students create individual images or cutouts at their desks to be placed on a common background created by the students themselves. Students can then attach their individual pieces to the background to create the overall image. This technique works especially well with younger students.

SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER:

• While your students create the mural, encourage creativity and collaboration. Make sure that all students are participating equally in the process, not allowing one or two students to dominate.

• Review the work in progress to avoid the inclusion of any inappropriate images or messages.

• During the creation process, have the students step back to view the mural. Take special note of colors or images that may dominate the mural. Discuss the use of colors to create certain feelings.

Completion & Celebration

CLOSURE

Keep in mind that the process of creating the mural may be as important to drug prevention as that of providing appropriate information. Participation in this process will give the students the opportunity to strengthen bonds with each other, as well as develop decision-making, cooperation, and problem solving skills. Once the mural is completed, it is important to have a sense of closure for the project. Have the class gather together to look at the mural, evaluate what they have created through cooperative effort, and celebrate their creation. Acknowledge each student's talents and contributions. Review why the mural was created and the message that it sends. You may want to plan written or verbal follow-up lessons or activities after completing the mural.

EXHIBITS

Showcasing your students' completed mural can be an excellent way of involving teachers, parents, and other members of your community in your drug prevention efforts. Discuss the possibility of exhibiting the mural with your students. Their involvement in this process can be a very rewarding experience and will help them to feel appreciated. If you have created a permanent mural, you may want to plan an unveiling of the mural, or host a reception. A portable mural can be moved and exhibited in a number of places—alone or with murals that may have been created by other schools in your community. Both of these are excellent ways to promote public awareness of your drug prevention efforts.

Please see "Community Involvement Ideas," for suggestions on how to exhibit the mural, involve your community, and create public awareness.

In the Know About Murals

Listed below are some suggestions to enhance your implementation of the Murals Reflecting Prevention project, depending on your lesson plans, learning objectives, and the time available.

EARLY HISTORY OF MURALS

For centuries, wall decorations such as frescoes, friezes, mosaics, and panels have been a popular form of art, and many of these have survived through the centuries for us to admire and study. Artists have painted murals for many different kinds of structures and for many different occasions. Prehistoric artists decorated caves with images of the

animals they hunted. Murals in ancient Egyptian tombs show people and possessions that were important to the owners of the tombs. Ancient Roman artists decorated their homes with murals showing gardens and architecture, as well as gods and mythical heroes.

• Have students research different types of murals throughout ancient and modern history and present their findings to the class.

• Present a lesson on the history of murals, with photos or illustrations of different types of murals.

MURALS AS SOCIAL PROPAGANDA

In Mexico, between 1910 and 1940, politically inspired artists expressed their views in huge, highly colored murals. They used murals for revolutionary political propaganda, and, by doing this, they reintroduced the concept of mural painting as a serious and socially useful artform. David Alfaro Siqueiros, Diego Rivera, and Jose Orozco were a few of these revolutionary Mexican artists. They believed that mural painting had a social role, not only in its informational and artistic qualities, but also in the way a mural can be painted by a group. This idea inspired a new generation of muralists.

• Look at photos or illustrations of murals created by Mexican artists during this time period and discuss them with your class.

• Compare these Mexican murals to modern or local murals. Discuss the similarities and differences.

CURRENT MURAL PAINTING

During the sixties and seventies, young artists in the United States looked to the early-century Mexican mural movement and their use of murals as a way to express a social or political message, and began creating murals on public buildings. The murals they created often expressed the artists' views about poverty, war, and prejudice. Today, murals are part of the urban scene, helping to combat the drabness of the inner city, and often, to convey a particular message. Across the country, mural art is helping many youth find expression for the pain of growing up in neighborhoods racked by vandalism and violence. Murals allow residents to reclaim the streets and revamp neglected parks. In some communities murals are used as a means to cover unsightly spray painted graffiti on public buildings and thoroughfares.

• If you live in an urban area, discuss murals that may be painted in your community and the messages that they convey.

• Compare murals created throughout ancient history with those created today. How has the purpose of a mural changed?

Teacher Tips

VISITING ARTIST

• You may want to invite a visiting artist into your classroom to assist you in the conceptualization and/or creation of your mural. Working with an accomplished local artist or muralist would be an exciting experience for your students and would give your students the benefit of learning mural creation techniques from a professional artist. A qualified muralist should have good communication skills and organizational skills, solid technical abilities, and experience working with youth. If the visiting artist is working with you in presenting the project, a preliminary planning meeting will ease the way for working with the students together. Be sure to review the learning objective with the artist, emphasizing the prevention focus of the project. To find a muralist to lead the project, contact your school system arts coordinator, local or state arts agency, or local art museums and schools for referrals.

INCORPORATING OTHER ART FORMS

• Students can incorporate other art forms into this activity to express their ATOD prevention message. Consider having the class write a narrative, poem, or song to accompany the mural. Or, they might want to create a dance or a play that expresses their feelings about their chosen theme. Work with the Language Arts, Music, and Physical Education teachers to coordinate these activities and integrate ATOD prevention across the curriculum. These activities can be performed for the public as part of an exhibit opening or mural dedication.

Introduction

Since there are many factors that influence young people to use alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, strategies for preventing such use must be diverse and comprehensive. Schools are only one environment which can help shape a student's decision whether to use alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs. For a drug prevention program to be truly effective, it is necessary that the entire community become involved. Parents, families, peers, local law enforcement agencies, media, and public figures can all contribute in important ways to a community's drug prevention efforts. Together, they establish the community's standards or norms regarding drug use. Perceptions of such norms are believed to have significant influence on drug use, particularly for adolescents. Working together, schools and communities can send a unified message to young people that illegal alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use is unacceptable.

The Murals Reflecting Prevention project presents the perfect opportunity to begin or enhance the involvement of your community in your drug prevention efforts. There are many ways parents, families, community leaders, local businesses, and the media can participate in this initiative. They range from the simple — such as inviting parents to join the students in creating the murals or requesting donated supplies from a local business — to the more elaborate and exciting — such as holding a public exhibition of the murals or arranging for a visit from the mayor. You are encouraged to pursue one or more ways of involving the community in the Murals Reflecting Prevention project. Be creative! Whichever one(s) you choose, your drug prevention efforts will surely be enhanced and community awareness of the importance of drug prevention programs will be increased.

On the pages that follow, several suggestions on involving the community in the Murals Reflecting Prevention project are briefly outlined. The suggestions include:

- Mounting a Public Exhibition
- Involving Public Officials
- Generating Public Awareness
- Involving Students in Extending the Outreach

Mounting a Public Exhibition

After your murals are completed, we encourage you to have them displayed at your school or organization and/or at other sites in your community. Such an exhibit illustrates for students that the community supports drug prevention, commends and supports their commitment to live drug-free, and appreciates and applauds their artistic talents. Exhibits and dedications can also be an excellent way of involving parents, teachers, and other members of your community in your drug prevention efforts, and a great way to initiate partnerships with other drug prevention organizations, corporate sponsors, arts organizations, volunteer organizations, and others.

When soliciting exhibit venues for your mural, there are several factors you need to consider in order to secure locations that will be seen by the maximum number of people, while also making sure that the mural is safely and securely exhibited. When speaking with your contact at a potential exhibit venue, be sure to ask how the mural can be exhibited—on easels, affixed to walls, hung by wire, behind store windows, etc., and how much space is allocated to the exhibition of the mural(s).

Possible exhibit venues include:

- School Hallway or Cafeteria
- Mayor's Office
- Community Centers (e.g., YMCA, YWCA, Boys & Girls' Clubs, etc.)
- Local, State, or Federal Government Buildings
- Public Libraries
- Shopping Malls
- Museums or Galleries
- Department Stores
- Corporate Building Lobbies
- Public Transportation Centers

Hosting An Exhibition or Dedication

To kick-off your exhibition, consider hosting an exhibit opening or mural dedication. If you are exhibiting portable murals, you may want to host an exhibition opening in cooperation with other schools or youth organizations from your area that have participated in the Murals Reflecting Prevention project. Another idea is to plan an opening reception at a PTA meeting, where the murals can be placed on display for parents and teachers to view.

If you have created a permanent mural, you can host a dedication or event at the mural site, if appropriate. If the site is not convenient for an event, or if the weather does not permit you to hold your dedication at the mural site, you can hold the event at another location, such as the school multi-purpose room or a community center. You may want to have an exhibit of photos showing the completed mural, along with photos of the student artists in the process of creating the mural.

Have students invite parents, families, local business supporters and sponsors, public officials, even the general public.

You may want to create an invitation to send, or send a press release inviting local media. During the event, the students can each receive a certificate or other acknowledgment for their work on the mural and their commitment to live drug-free. You may also consider incorporating other art forms into your murals exhibition. Please see the preceeding section, **Creating A Mural**, for suggestions.

Involving Public Officials

Participation of public officials, such as the mayor, police chief, county managers, city council representatives, school superintendent, members of Congress, state senators and representatives, etc., is also encouraged as each of these officials can make a contribution to the success of the project in your community. Their involvement raises public awareness of your school's efforts and may potentially draw additional media attention. More importantly, however, their participation in the project will enhance your students' understanding of and respect for laws related to ATOD use. Among the ways you might involve public officials in the Murals Reflecting Prevention project are:

- Invite a public official to host a kick-off event with the students prior to beginning the mural.
- Request that the mayor or other community official visit your classroom to discuss drug prevention with the students before they begin the mural. His or her presentation could focus on laws related to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; the community's high expectations of the students — including that they avoid ATOD use.
- Invite your mayor or a public official to attend the exhibit opening or mural dedication.
- Ask the mayor to host the exhibition or dedication.
- Ask your mayor or other public official to issue a proclamation or write an editorial for the local newspaper supporting your school's alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention efforts and encouraging the community to become involved.

Generating Public Awareness

Local news media will likely be interested in your students' creative drug prevention efforts. Not only is the participation of your students in the Murals Reflecting Prevention project a positive, upbeat story, but the murals also provide great visuals for print or broadcast media. In addition, the school-community cooperation on this issue of great public concern will naturally attract the media. To capitalize on this interest, and to generate positive public awareness for your school or community group, consider informing local print, radio, and television media of your students' efforts.

Here are some suggestions for conducting successful media outreach:

- Send a press release to local print, radio, and television media informing them of your students' participation in the Murals Reflecting Prevention

project. You may want to take some photos of your students while they are creating their mural to send with the press release. Include an invitation to come watch the students at work on their murals or to attend an unveiling or exhibition opening. For a sample press release, contact Learning Systems Group at 202/783-8800.

Some media outlets to consider sending press releases to include:

- daily, weekly, and community newspapers
- television stations (cable and local network affiliates)
- radio stations
- school system newsletters
- state department of education news bulletins
- community or state drug prevention coalition newsletters
- corporate newsletters
- arts publications

• Enlist the help of experienced media people — TV anchors or reporters, radio station disc jockeys, local newspaper and magazine editors, and the writers of newsletters for key local organizations. They might assist you in editing your press release, getting a story placed, or offer tips on how to attract the media to your event.

• Write a public service announcement (PSA) to deliver through your local television or radio station. The PSA could invite the public to come view the completed mural(s) or to attend an exhibition opening or mural dedication. You might consider having students write and record it for broadcast as a follow-up lesson or in cooperation with the Language Arts teacher as a complementary, concurrent classroom activity.

• Contact you school district's public relations department. They may be able to assist you in publicizing your student's efforts, as they are usually eager to highlight positive developments taking place within the school system.

• Enlist the support and cooperation of your community leaders—mayors, legislators, parent-teacher groups, activist groups, healthcare professionals (including drug prevention and treatment organizations), religious institutions, law enforcement associations, and others. Their support could be in the form of a sponsorship, a donation of supplies, or even volunteers to assist with the creation of the mural.

• Take clear, quality slides of your murals and ask the local movie theaters to project them before showing the feature film.

• Ask a local grocery store chain to reproduce the students' work on their shopping bags.

• Contact local outdoor advertising firms and ask them to reproduce your mural on a billboard in your community.

Involving Students in Extending the Outreach

You need not undertake all these activities yourself. Students can learn a great deal and develop new skills by becoming involved in extending the outreach and awareness of their efforts by:

• Writing an article for the school newspaper

• Writing a press release announcing the classroom's involvement in the Murals Reflecting Prevention project

• Assisting in developing community involvement (e.g., by inviting parents to class, etc.)

• Writing a class letter to your mayor or governor

• Planning an opening reception or exhibition of the mural

• Planning and executing a fund-raiser to raise money for mural supplies

• Writing letters to local businesses to request sponsorship or funding for supplies

• Assisting in locating a permanent mural site in your school or community by researching possible locations, contacting the appropriate people to

request permission, or writing a proposal to city/county officials with their request

• Developing a plan to involve other organizations/groups (i.e. Boy Scouts, 4-H, YMCA) in the creation of your mural

Don't forget to enlist the support and assistance of individual parents as well as your parent-teacher organization in these efforts.

Regardless of how you ultimately involve your community in the Murals Reflecting Prevention project, the results will be well worth your time and energy as your community indicates its seriousness about preventing alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use among its youth.

Murals Reflecting Prevention Success Stories

Many schools and communities that have participated in this project have had great success with involving their communities in the Murals Reflecting Prevention project and their drug prevention efforts. Below are a few success stories that may help inspire and assist you in your efforts:

Students from Chadbourn, North Carolina entered their mural, created on four bed sheets, in their town's annual Strawberry Festival Parade. The students mounted their mural, entitled, "Superstars Say No To Drugs," on a flatbed track and rode with their creation through the streets of Chadbourn, proudly displaying their commitment to live drug free.

Poultney, Vermont area schools wanted to involve their entire community—from young to old—in the Murals Reflecting Prevention project. After deciding on a 3-D found object mural, they requested that each member of their community donate an object that represented a healthy activity that they enjoy. The request brought in everything from building blocks, to skis, to fishing rods to golf clubs, all which became part of a wonderful (and large!) mural, entitled "Stages of Life," that was exhibited throughout their community.

A Columbia, South Carolina prevention agency worked with various sponsors to incorporate a local competition into their implementation of the Murals Reflecting Prevention project in their community. At a community-wide exhibition, three murals were selected, which were then painted on permanent locations in the community. These locations included their minor league baseball team's stadium and two local school district service vehicles.

The Nashville YWCA collaborated with several other Nashville community youth and prevention organizations to lead local students in a series of prevention lessons and mural brainstorming sessions for this project. The culmination of this community effort was a one day event for all the students to collaboratively create their murals, meet new friends, and have fun.

Led by a professional muralist, youth from three schools in Indianapolis, Indiana paired up with their local city parks and recreation department to create several permanent murals on walls in local parks throughout the city. The murals now serve as an inspiration to all who visit the parks.

Students in Louisville, Kentucky enlisted the support of a local outdoor advertising firm to reproduce some of the murals they created for the Murals Reflecting Prevention project on billboards located throughout their community.

Westover Elementary School in Silver Spring, Maryland participated in the Murals Reflecting Prevention project by having each student in kindergarten through 5th grade create a fabric square depicting a favorite healthy activity. The squares were then sewn together by teachers and parents to create a quilt of healthy alternative activities to drug and alcohol use.

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Janice Krech, Art Teacher
Lois McMillan, Parent

Windsor Farm Elementary School
Annapolis, Maryland
Joseph LoCasio, Principal
Jennifer Gruver, Art Teacher
Frances Brown, First Grade Teacher
Leslie Malone, Visual Artist

Owings Mills High School
Owings Mills, Maryland
Marvin Hoffman, Principal
Charles Anderson, Art Teacher

Learning Systems Group

Susan Flowers Dixon, President

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